



SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

"HONGKONG TELEGRAPH"

OF THE 27TH DECEMBER, 1895.



THE DEFENCES OF SINGAPORE.

WHY THEY SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED.

The following article on the defences of Singapore was contributed to the *Strait Times* on the 18th instant:—

The adequacy or inadequacy of the defence of such an important Imperial Coaling Station as Singapore is a matter of vital consequence, not only to the inhabitants of the Colony but to the whole British Empire, and this strikes one especially at a time when rumours of war are heard on every side. Moreover, if these rumours were to become "war," we should be taught but too late that the port is inadequately defended, if such proved the case; for forts, and guns, and torpedo boats are not made in a day. Doubtless, the points which we propose to touch on have been considered by those in authority; nevertheless, it may do good to call attention to them afresh. In the first place, it can scarcely be doubted that a torpedo fleet is a necessity in these waters to assist the forts and forces already on the Island, and the surroundings of Singapore are extremely favourable naturally for torpedo defensive warfare. The large number of coral reefs and islands, forming so many intricate channels, would afford good and safe shelter for such boats to lie in wait for the enemy's ships, and would be of additional advantage in defending the town, as of a certainty the enemy would be very chary of manœuvring or even approaching at night or in foggy, rainy, or misty weather with the ever-possible liability of a torpedo being fired at them under cover of the darkness and without warning. Secondly, Johore Strait, left open to navigation as it appears to be, without forts at either end, and no torpedo boats to repel any attack from that quarter, simply invites the enemy to land at the back of the Island and fight the question out on *terra firma*, always making their goal the coal sheds in order to destroy the coal, for, the coal once destroyed, an enemy would not desire to hold Singapore during war time even if they could. Moreover, the fact can be proved, although some may doubt it, that a force could be landed at many places, in point of fact almost anywhere on the Island of Singapore, especially at high spring tides, and there are, doubtless, Malay fishermen who would be captured and bribed or frightened into piloting boats to the most favourable landing places. How could this be prevented at so many different points without more forts and torpedo boats? It is doubtful, too, if the land forces could be moved swiftly enough and with sufficient safety from one point to another. There may be little or no danger in clear weather and in daylight, but that is not the time when such an attack would be planned. The enemy would probably choose foggy, misty weather and a dark night, when the existing forts would have great difficulty in finding the position of the attacking force, even if they could bring the guns to bear. Further, the enemy's map-of-war could find shelter among some of the surrounding islands and await a favourable opportunity to make a combined attack by sea and by a landing party. Again, a heavy though not extensive fog hangs over the Town of Singapore very frequently in the morning, sometimes for ten or fourteen days consecutively. These fogs descend suddenly on the town directly the sun is above the horizon, they rarely extend much beyond the Harbour Limits, and are most frequent during the monsoon changes and for two months of the South-west monsoon. Under cover of such a fog, and just outside its limit, the enemy's fleet could approach in comparative safety close to the forts and shell the Town, being in position to know their exact distance from the forts, while the defending forces could only judge of the enemy's position by sound, and would, therefore, have to fire at an invisible target. At such a time a combined land and sea attack would be made involving, as its greatest risk, to the attacking party, a sudden lifting of the fog; but, if this happened, the enemy could retire at once to a safe distance. We do not write as an expert, but there is something serious in what has been said pointing, if true, to the urgent necessity that additional forts should be built at various points on the Island, especially at or near both entrances to the Johore Straits and particularly on Middle Island, and that torpedo boats should be stationed at Singapore. We fix on Middle Island, which is well covered with coconut trees, because of its commanding position; for guns placed on that Island would be within range of vessels approaching the New Harbour by Sinkie Channel or steaming past the Raffles Lighthouse by the South Channel, that is the main channel of the Straits, to St. John's Island (the Buffalo Rock forcing a vessel using this channel to pass close to Middle Island), and from thence to the eastern entrance to the New Harbour. There is also always a further danger to be anticipated internally from the Native population in time of siege when food supplies might run short, namely, a riot which would be of very serious consequence. The Singapore Volunteer Artillery would probably be called upon in such a case, but could they, or any of the land forces, be spared from defending the attack from without? It is surely doubtful.

COLONIAL AND IMPERIAL AFFAIRS.

Edinburgh, November 20th.

It is probable that the future historian of the British Empire, searching for the period when Imperial Federation ceased to be a mere pious opinion among statesmen, and began to take practical shape, will be able to discover date and occasion in the appointment of Mr. Chamberlain to the Colonial Office. Already, without seeking to force events, but simply by virtue of the attitude he has taken up on Colonial and Imperial questions, and by saying the proper word and doing the right thing in season, he has done much to ripen a somewhat backward germ towards flower and fruit. Much will be expected from his administration of what is, in the Imperial sense, perhaps the most influential office under the British Crown. But he has already done enough to earn the gratitude of the mother country and of the Colonies. Instance in point will be found in his language and attitude at his meeting yesterday with a deputation of the Agents-General of the Colonies, who came to consult him on the practical means of laying down a submarine cable connecting Australia with the Pacific Coast of our North American possessions. Mr. Chamberlain showed thorough appreciation of the vast importance of this undertaking, in its commercial, political, and financial aspects. But he also looked beyond and behind it, and perceived in this meeting of Colonial representatives, anxious to promote, by common action and with the help and under the auspices of the Imperial authority, an object they had all at heart, the nucleus of a "Council of the Empire," and the "evidence of solidarity and sympathy" as wide-reaching as the bonds of Empire itself. Emphasis is given to this view by the fact that, as at the Conference held at Ottawa, spokesmen were present from the South African Colonies which, as Mr. Chamberlain points out, have no direct and immediate concern with the project of a submarine cable connecting the British possessions on the opposite shores of the Pacific. It yields proof of the growth of the feeling that what touches the interests of one part of the Empire touches the whole—that by coming into closer and more sympathetic relations with the home country the great self-governing Colonies of Britain draw nearer to each other, and without sacrificing one iota of their powers and privileges of developing themselves on their own lines and after their own minds, they share more largely in the prosperity, the protection, and the glory signified by the British flag.

The question upon which the Colonial Secretary conferred with the Agents-General is one of high and growing importance. It was thrashed out in some measure at the Ottawa meeting, and the favourable disposition of the Imperial as well as of the Colonial Governments was then ascertained. Another step in advance may now be regarded as made. It is no longer a question of whether the scheme of laying a Pacific cable between the Canadian Dominion and the Australasian Colonies will be carried out, but one of ways and means. Important problems of route, cost, and the like have first to be worked out. The arrangement proposed, and likely to be given effect to without delay, is that a Joint Commission, on which the Imperial and Colonial Governments will be represented, shall be appointed to inquire and report on the whole subject. Canada and the Australasian Colonies are the countries that are most immediately interested in the scheme. A direct line of telegraphic communication will be an important adjunct to the new channels of trade and travel and political and social intercourse that are being opened up between the Dominion and Australia. The mere discussion of the best means of promoting and improving trans-oceanic intercourse has already had significant effects on the commerce and even the politics of the two regions. Canadians on one side and Australian and New Zealand colonists on the other are finding out, not only how many articles of their produce and manufacture they can profitably exchange, but also the many sympathies, ideas, and institutions they have in common. They are clasping hands across the South Sea as members of the great family of nations living under the British Crown. It is not too much to say that these exchanges of opinion and the completed work which may be expected to follow upon them will have an important effect in hastening the formation of an Australasian Federation on the lines of the Canadian Union, and of bringing nearer the day of Imperial Federation itself.

In a wider sense than this, however, the question of laying a cable between British Columbia and Australasia must rank as an Imperial one. In connection with the mail routes across the Pacific, and as a continuation of the Canadian Pacific Railway, it is part and parcel of the great westward route of communication between the centre of the Empire and its extremities. The great and all-important feature of that route is that from start to finish, except where it passes through the high seas, where we are well able to defend it, it is over British ground. It will be worked with British capital, and be under British protection and control. It will be independent of foreign tariffs and restrictions. It is destined to become—nay, it is already—one of the strongest and closest bonds of Empire. But the full strategic and political as well as commercial value of the Pacific highway has yet to be realised. It has not escaped the notice of those who watch the tides of trade and political action that the day of the Pacific is at hand.

The war between China and Japan; the critical condition of the former and the phenomenal development of the latter country; the advance of Russian influence and enterprise in the shape of the Siberian Railway; the search, bound some day to be rewarded, by the Great Northern Power for an outlet in the open Pacific; the appearance and advance encroachments of France on the borders of Siam and China—these are some of the prominent new factors at work on the Asiatic side of the great basin of the world's waters. It is impossible for us to forget that the Pacific trade is still in the main the trade of Britain and its dependencies; that the only civilised Power which has so far established a firm and solid footing on the eastern and southern margin of this vast ocean is Great Britain, in the shape of its Australasian Colonies; and that the dominating political interest of these Colonies is the freedom and safety of the seas that surround them. It is necessary to look some way ahead; and movements and projects on the American side of the Pacific, where also we have a vast frontage and standing ground in the Canadian Dominion, cannot escape notice. Of these movements, that which has for its purpose the construction of the Maritime Canal across the Republic of Nicaragua is perhaps best worthy of notice. Mr. A. C. Colquhoun, in his new book "The Key of the Pacific," ably and elaborately draws attention to the nature and present position of the Nicaraguan project, and the political and commercial consequences should the inter-oceanic Canal become a reality. There is no exaggeration in the statement that the opening of this new waterway would create a revolution in the trade and in the international relations of the countries of the world, comparable only to that produced by the construction of the Suez Canal. It would shorten the route to our Pacific possessions and markets. But it would also bring the United States into the field of Eastern competition, with advantages in the matter of nearness and readiness of access which it would go hard with us and with any other rival to cope with. It would be to the Eastern and Southern States all and more that the Siberian Railway promises to be to Russia in opening a short way for its commerce in the direction of Eastern Asia and Australasia; and against these rivals we should have to make what shift we can with our command of the open sea, and (for military purposes) of the Canadian Pacific, and of our bases in India, Australia, and British Columbia.

The Nicaraguan Canal is not yet opened; it is not even fairly begun. No one who has examined the matter doubts that some day, perhaps not so many years hence, the Canal will be an accomplished fact. But in the meantime we have time, in this quarter, to breathe and look about us. Political obstacles, even more than financial and engineering difficulties—huge as these are—have hitherto stood in the way of the realisation of the scheme of opening a channel to the Pacific by way of the San Juan River and the great fresh-water lake of Nicaragua. It is true that the utter and disgraceful collapse of the Panama scheme, while it left the ground clear for the Nicaraguan project, has made capitalists chary of investing money in the cutting of Central American isthmuses; and that the Construction Company that surveyed the route and began operations at Greytown, at the Atlantic end, has come to a stop for lack of funds. The money, there is every reason to think, might be obtained for the carrying through of this great work, were the problem finally settled of the control of the Canal after its completion. This duty a large body of opinion in the States is resolved to assign to the Great Republic. The existing Nicaraguan Maritime Canal Company obtained its concessions and began its work under a charter specially granted by the American Congress, a step for which the only precedent was that afforded by the Union Pacific Company. As matters now stand, a Bill has passed the American Senate under which it is proposed that the United States Government shall take the quite unprecedented step of guaranteeing interest and exercising control over a vast undertaking to be carried out on the soil and within the authority of an independent foreign State. The main object of the Bill, as explained by one of its chief advocates, Senator Morgan, is that the United States should be able, as stockholder and guarantor of the corporation, to exercise as full an influence and control over its property and management as is possible "without a violation of the sovereignty of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and without an infraction of, or departure from, the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty," which international engagement, it will be remembered, binds Great Britain and the Republic to the neutralisation of any canal carried by this route across Central America. The spirit of the promoters of this guarantee scheme, and the dangers that British commerce might have to face were undivided American control established, may be judged from the amendment introduced into it requiring that all material and supplies used in the construction of the canal, where not grown in Costa Rica or Nicaragua, shall be purchased in the United States. Either by private enterprise or under national or international auspices this doorway to the Pacific will ere long be opened; and the resources of diplomacy should be found sufficient to secure its neutralisation, under the care of the great English-speaking nations.—*The Scotsman*.

Printed and Published by CHAS. DUNN at No. 5, Pedder's Hill, in the City of Victoria, Hongkong.

Advertisements.

POLICE NOTICE.

TO enable PASSENGERS to be issued gradually the POLICE will accept 4TH QUARTER PASSENGERS till the 25th proximo. Old Passes should be returned when applying for renewal.

W. C. H. HASTINGS,
Acting Capt. Supt. of Police.
Police Department,
Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1827]

NEW YEAR HOLIDAY.

IN accordance with Ordinance No. 6 of 1875, the Undermentioned BANKS will be CLOSED for the Transaction of Public Business on WEDNESDAY, the 1st January, 1896:—

For the CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA, AUSTRALIA, AND CHINA,
T. H. WHITEHEAD,
Manager, Hongkong.

For the HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION,
T. JACKSON,
Chief Manager.

For the NATIONAL BANK OF CHINA, LIMITED,
GEO. W. F. PLAYFAIR,
Chief Manager.

For the MERCANTILE BANK OF INDIA, LIMITED,
J. W. R. TAYLOR,
Manager, Hongkong.

For the BANQUE DE L'INDO-CHINE,
Hongkong Agency,
L. SIMON,
Manager.

For the BANK OF CHINA & JAPAN, LIMITED,
HONGKONG,
CHANTREY INCHBALD,
Manager.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1829]

INSURANCE HOLIDAY.

THE Undermentioned INSURANCE OFFICES will be CLOSED for the Transaction of Public Business on WEDNESDAY, the 1st January, 1896:—

JARDINE, MATHESON & CO.,
General Managers,
HONGKONG FIRE INSURANCE CO., LD.

N. J. EDE,
Secretary,
UNION INSURANCE SOCIETY OF CANTON, LD.

B. C. T. GRAY,
Acting Agent,
NORTH-CHINA INSURANCE CO., LD.

W. H. RAY,
Secretary,
CHINA TRADERS' INSURANCE CO., LD.

SHEWAN & CO.,
Agents,
YANTZSE INSURANCE ASSOCIATION, LD.

GEORGE L. TOMLIN,
Acting Secretary,
CHINA FIRE INSURANCE CO., LD.

WM. MACBEAN,
Manager,
THE STRAITS INSURANCE CO., LD.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1830]

FOR AMOY AND TAIWANFOO.

THE Steamship
"AMUR,"
Captain C. Meers, will be despatched as above TO-MORROW, the 28th instant, at Daylight. For Freight or Passage, apply to STOLTERFORTH & HAGAN, Agents.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1825]

INDO-CHINA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY, LIMITED.

FOR SHANGHAI VIA SWATOW.
(Taking Cargo and Passengers at through rates for CHEFOO, HANKOW and PORTS on the YANTZSE.)

THE Company's Steamship
"TAISANG,"
Captain H. W. Hogg, will be despatched as above TO-MORROW, the 28th instant, at 4 P.M. For Freight or Passage, apply to JARDINE, MATHESON & Co., General Managers.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1826]

FOR SHANGHAI.

THE Steamship
"LYEEMOON,"
Captain G. Heermann, will be despatched for the above PORT TO-MORROW, the 28th instant, at 4 P.M. For Freight or Passage, apply to SIEMSEN & Co., Agents.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1831]

CHINA NAVIGATION COMPANY, LIMITED.

FOR SWATOW, SHANGHAI AND CHEFOO.

THE Steamship
"TAMSUI,"
Captain Pierce, will be despatched TO-MORROW, the 28th instant, at 4 P.M. For Freight or Passage, apply to BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE, Agents.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1805]

"SHELL" LINE OF STEAMERS.

FOR HAVRE, LONDON AND HAMBURG.

THE Company's Steamship
"PECTAN,"
Captain N. Hocken, will be despatched as above on THURSDAY, the 2nd January. For Freight, apply to ARNOLD, KARBURG & Co., Agents.

Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1736]

THE SPORTSMAN'S POCKET BOOK.

PUBLISHED
AT THE
"HONGKONG TELEGRAPH" OFFICE.
PRICE:—\$1.50 PER COPY.

N.B.—This work is a complete record of the most recent Hongkong, Shanghai and Coast Port Race Meetings and, in addition to a good deal of other useful information, contains a revised list of Record Times made on the Shanghai Course, as well as several pages of Sporting Memoranda and a useful index.

Advertisements.

ZETLAND LODGE.

No. 525, E.C.

A REGULAR MEETING of the above LODGE will be held in the FREEMASONS' HALL, Zetland Street, THIS EVENING, the 27th instant, at 8 for 8.30 o'clock precisely. Visiting Brethren are cordially invited to attend. Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1795]

FOR NEW YEAR.

BRILLIANT COLOURED ELECTRIC LIGHTS, RED, GREEN, &c. Considerably Superior to the BLUE LIGHTS, for ILLUMINATION and SIGNAL PURPOSES. At 75 Cents Each.

PLATED WARE, FANCY GOODS, &c., &c., at Competing Prices. NOVELTY EMPORIUM, 9 D'Agulhar Street. Hongkong, 27th December, 1895. [1828]

Intimations.

DAKIN, CRICKSHANK & COMPANY, LIMITED, VICTORIA DISPENSARY, HONGKONG.

AERATED WATERS.

SIMPLE AERATED WATER. SODA WATER. LEMONADE.

GINGER ALE. SASSAPARILLA. RASPBERRYADE, &c.

DAKIN, CRICKSHANK & Co.'s WATERS are made under the constant supervision of a duly qualified English Chemist and will bear comparison with the best English Manufactures.

Special terms to HOTELS, CLUBS, MESSES and other Large Consumers.

Any complaints should be addressed to the Manager. Hongkong, 3rd May, 1895. [1650]

THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY has just received FRESH SUPPLIES OF

WHOLESOME CONFECTIONERY AND DELICIOUS SWEETS, of the HIGHEST QUALITY and PURITY.

These include—

CADBURY'S SPECIAL CREMES

PATE D'ABRICOT, JORDAN ALMONDS

CARAMELS, PRALINES.

DESSERT CHOCOLATE,

NOUGAT, FRUIT JELLIES,

CRYSTALLISED FRUITS,

METZ FRUITS,

ASSORTED TOFFEES,

MIXED BONBONS,

FRY'S CHOCOLATES,

TANGERINE BISCUITS,

ORANGE PASTE, ORANGE ROLLS,

&c., &c., &c.

Together with the Latest Novelties in

FANCY BOXES,

which are very suitable as Seasonable Presents for LADIES and YOUNG PEOPLE.

FRENCH CONFECTIONERY and CONSERVES, in Large Assortment, from the BEST PARISIEN HOUSES.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LD. THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY. ESTABLISHED A.D. 1843. Hongkong, 30th November, 1895. [1406]

MARRIAGE.

On the 5th instant, at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Singapore, F. C. STRAPEROV, of Kuala Lumpur, and Constantina, daughter of William Hopper of London.

DEATH.

On the 17th inst., at "The Pavilion," Oxley Hill, Singapore, MARY, widow of the late Catchick Moses, aged 68 years.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It is requested that all communications relating to *Bureaux*, *Advertisements*, &c., be addressed to the "Manager, Hongkong Telegraph," and to the Editor. Letters on Editorial matters to be sent to "The Editor" and not to individual members of the staff. Communications intended for publication must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, but need not necessarily be published; but as evidence of good faith. While the columns of the *Hongkong Telegraph* will always be open for the discussion of subjects of general interest, it is distinctly understood that the Editor does not in any way hold himself responsible for opinions thus expressed.

ADVERTISERS are requested to forward all notices intended for insertion in this paper, not later than Three o'clock so as to reach the printer's office in time for publication. Advertisements and Subscriptions which are not ordered for a fixed period, will be continued until discontinued. The *Hongkong Telegraph* has the largest circulation of any English newspaper published in the Far East, and is therefore the best medium for Advertisements. Terms can be learnt on application. The *Hongkong Telegraph*'s number at the Telephone Central Exchange is No. 2. Telephone "Direct" is "Telegraph" Hongkong.

THE *Daily Press* says the floating dock at Sourabaya has sunk! This means, probably, that the dock at Sourabaya has ceased to be a floating basin. The *Yupiter*, a first-class battleship of the *Majestic* type, was successfully launched at Clydebank, on the 16th ultimo. Her displacement is 14,900 tons. A large number of Chinese picked up abroad without light or pass during prohibited hours were fined in the usual sums at the Magistracy this morning.

REUTERS' MESSAGES.

THE VENEZUELAN HUBBUB. LONDON, December 23rd. The New York market has recovered, closing strong.

The feeling in America is decidedly calmer and more friendly to Great Britain, as notably exemplified by the *New York Tribune* which has entirely changed its note and urges peace. Fugitive utterances throughout America depictate war.

CLEVELAND AT A DISCOUNT. LONDON, December 24th. President Cleveland's political and financial discredit is increasing. The markets are improving, but continue sensitive.

OF COURSE! It is believed in Washington that a peaceful and honourable settlement of the Venezuelan difficulty will eventually be arranged.

TURKEY IN ASIA. LONDON, December 25th. A Turkish official despatch states that a great battle was fought on Saturday between Turkish troops and the Druses, in which the latter lost 12,000 and the former 100.

The *Times*, commenting on the agitation in England in favour of the Armenians, urges the impossibility of Great Britain acting alone.

(From *L'Avenir du Tonkin*.) THE ABYSSINIAN CAMPAIGN. PARIS, December 21st. Signor Crispien has asked for a vote of 20,000,000 *lire*, owing to necessity for fitting out reinforcements which the recent reverses in Abyssinia have shown to be urgently needed.

The Italian losses in the action at Ambaiegla amounted to fully 2,000 men.

THE WAR IN CUBA. PARIS, December 21st. The Spanish Government have taken steps to ensure the rapid suppression of the revolution in Cuba, and with that object in view have now despatched from Lisbon large reinforcements.

(From the *Rangoon Times*.) OBITUARY. BOMBAY, December 9th. A telegram received here from Aden announces the death of Major Sandbach, R.A., from the effects of injuries inflicted by a fall from a horse.

LONDON, December 8th. The death is announced of George Augustus Sala, the celebrated journalist.

[This well-known journalist and author was, says *Men and Women of the Times*, the son of a well-known Italian gentleman who married a favourite English stage actress of West Indian extraction. He was born in London in 1818, and was brought up with a view to following art as a profession, but quitted it for literature. He was a well-known contributor to various magazines and the *London Illustrated News*, and the founder and first editor of the *Temple Bar Magazine*. He went as special correspondent to the *London Daily Telegraph* to the United States in 1864, and on his return, at the close of 1864, published the result of his observations under the title of "America in the Midst of War." He wrote, in 1866, a series of graphic letters for the *Daily Telegraph*, from Algeria, during the Emperor's visit to that colony, and re-visited Algeria and Morocco in 1873. In 1870 Mr. Sala was at Metz and in Eastern France as war correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*. After witnessing the fall of the Empire in Paris on September 4th, he went to Rome to record the entry of the Italian army into the Eternal City. In January 1875, he again visited Spain; on his return in April he was despatched to Venice to describe the *filles* consequent on the interview of the Emperor Francis-Joseph and King Victor Emmanuel, and he afterwards published his impressions under the title of "Two Kings and a Kaiser." In December 1876, he again visited Russia as special correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*, and travelling from St. Petersburg to Moscow, preceded thence to Warsaw, and subsequently

traversed the length of the Empire to observe the mobilisation then in progress of the Russian army; ultimately reaching Odessa and Constantinople by the Black Sea, in time for the opening of the Conference on the Eastern Question.]

A SHOCKING TRAGEDY.

BOMBAY, December 9th.

A Surati servant in the employ of Professor Bain of the Deccan College on Saturday night got possession of a revolver belonging to his master and shot his mistress four times, also wounding a girl. He escaped and threw himself into a well, where his body was discovered through the revolver and the murderer's clothes being found lying on the edge of the well. The man had first shot himself and then fell into the well.

(Special to *Singapore Free Press*.) HYDROPHOBIA IN PERAK.

TAIPING, PERAK, December 16th.

Mr. C. C. Scott, the Inspector of Mines at Tapah, was bitten on Saturday last by a rabid dog, and goes to the Pasteur Institute at Saigon at the Government expense. All dogs in that district have been ordered to be destroyed.

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

THE latest quotation for Hongkong and Shanghai Bank shares on the London Stock Exchange is £40.

THE "crack" British cruiser *Grafton* will probably arrive here to-morrow, or early on Sunday at latest.

H.M.S. *Porpoise* leaves port to-morrow bound for Foochow to relieve the *Archer* which is under orders to return to Hongkong as soon as relieved.

THE *Daily Press* says the floating dock at Sourabaya has sunk! This means, probably, that the dock at Sourabaya has ceased to be a floating basin.

THE *Yupiter*, a first-class battleship of the *Majestic* type, was successfully launched at Clydebank, on the 16th ultimo. Her displacement is 14,900 tons.

A large number of Chinese picked up abroad without light or pass during prohibited hours were fined in the usual sums at the Magistracy this morning.

DR. W. G. GRACE, the distinguished cricketeer, has invested the £5,000 recently presented to him by the people of England in an insurance endowment policy payable in fifteen years.

A REGULAR meeting of Zetland Lodge, No. 525, E.C., will be held in the Freemasons' Hall, Zetland Street, this evening, at 8 for 8.30 o'clock precisely. Visiting brethren are cordially invited.

JUDGMENT in the case of Ng Tat Chi v. Chan Pak, which was before Chief Justice Sir Fielding Clarke on Tuesday, was given to-day. This was that defendant was to pay plaintiff \$20 and costs.

TO-MORROW. At 11 a.m. Panjion Mining Co.'s meeting. At noon, A. S. Watson & Co., and the Balmoral Company meetings. 9 p.m. A. D. C. performance at Theatre Royal. 4.15 p.m. Football match.

THE annual tea and meeting at St. Peter's Seamen's Church will be held to-night. Tea will be served at 6.30 p.m. in the Sailors' Home. Commodore Boyes, R.N., will take the chair at 8 p.m.

THE body of the private in the Rifle Brigade, who was drowned in the boat accident nearly two weeks ago, was found floating near Quarry Bay yesterday morning, and after being identified was buried.

THE *Straits Times* of the 17th reports that at Sourabaya the Captain China has been arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the making of counterfeit Java Bank notes. He is one of the richest Chinamen in Java.

THE dinner of the Straits Settlements Association took place at the Grand Hotel, London, on 20th ultimo. Mr. William Adamson presided, and the chief guest was Sir Cecil Smith, the late Governor of the Straits Settlements.

TO enable night-passes to be issued gradually the Police will very kindly accept 4th quarter passes till the 25th proximo. Old passes should be returned when applying for renewal. We shall have to deal with this matter very seriously in an early issue.

THE *Rangoon Gazette* publishes a telegram, dated London, 6th December, which throws additional light on the Venezuelan hubbub, as follows:—Lord Salisbury's despatch regarding the Venezuelan dispute has been received at Washington. In it his Lordship maintains the Schomburgk boundary as the minimum territory of British Guiana.

On Tuesday evening, at 6.30, fire broke out in a godown at Nos. 347 and 349, Queen's Road West, caused by the carelessness of the coolies who were carrying in cargo by candle-light. The Fire Brigade was quickly on the spot, and as the fire was turned on at the time the blast was easily subdued. The contents of the godown were fully covered by a policy for \$5,000 in the Hongkong Fire Insurance Co., Messrs. Jardine Matheson & Co., agents.

A RESIDENT writes:—I sent a letter to Macao on the 5th instant which I registered and on which I paid the *express* registration fee of 5 cents so as to be sure to get a receipt for the cover in due course. Up to date (26.12.95) I am without the desired receipt, and when I inquired about it at the General Post Office I was told "the receipt is not sent back yet." We have often suggested that the best way to forward valuables is under covers which are neither sealed nor registered. Then, unless it is a very bulky cover, no one is likely to suppose it contains valuables. Our correspondent should try on present and let us know the result later on. Dollars to cents he won't regret taking our advice.

LIAOTUNG Peninsula, as will be seen by a special telegram published in another column, has been completely evacuated by the troops of the Emperor of Japan.

Six griffins arrived last Tuesday morning from Shanghai, and these were drawn at noon at Mr. Kennedy's stables by Mr. Mody, Mr. McKie, Lord Conyngham, Mr. Mody, Mr. Harton and Mr. Lewis.

It was reported that on the 9th inst. that Baron von Derick was appointed Minister of the Interior in place of Herr Koeller, who resigned because he considered Emperor William had snubbed Prince Hohenzollern in a very unbecoming manner.

The death at Bangkok of Mr. Richard Götze, for some years past the manager of the *Stam Mercantile Press*, in connection with which he started the *Stam Mercantile Gazette*, now the *Stam Free Press*, is announced in Bangkok exchanges received here yesterday.

FOUR sporadic cases of plague have been reported during the last three days, two being from the West Point district, and two from the Chinese quarters near the centre of the colony. One is a Portuguese. The patients have all been removed to the Kennedy-town hospital.

In our next issue we shall review the very interesting pamphlet received to-day from the Hon. Secretary of the local branch of the Navy League. It contains matter which should deeply interest all Britons who take a real and not merely a superficial interest in the welfare of the Empire.

In celebration of her four-hundredth voyage, the Douglas liner *Thales*, Capt. H. Bathurst, was decorated from stem to stern on entering the harbour to-day, and had an enormous "400" in evergreens hung between the masts. We congratulate both the genial skipper and the company on this brilliant record.

THE last tie in the second round of the series of matches now being played in connection with the Football Challenge Cup Competition will be played at Happy Valley to-morrow afternoon, when 35 Company, S.D., R.A., will try conclusions with a team representing H.M.S. *Centurion*. Referee, Mr. E. F. Mackay.

LAST Wednesday night a sailor named James Lowen, aged 45, who has lately been residing in the Sailors' Home, fell off Gibb's Wharf. A friend at once jumped into a sampan and tried to get him out, but failed to do so before life was extinct. The Water Police were soon on the spot, and efforts were made to resuscitate him, but without avail. The body was taken to the Mortuary, and an inquiry will be held.

THE *Memur* yesterday brought up the news from the colonies that the Customs duties in New South Wales are to be largely abolished from the beginning of next year, and that it is estimated that the decrease in revenue thus occasioned will be fully met by the income to be derived under the newly instituted land and income tax, which is expected to yield one hundred thousand pounds or more per annum. This looks uncommonly like robbing Peter to pay Paul.

THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.

This year in Hongkong Christmas festivities were much more in evidence than for many a long year. The "plethora of money" which the exchange and share brokers mentioned in comparatively recent reports may have had something to do with it, though to judge by the weekly Summary Court hearing-paper it appears that local skylarks still find it possible to relieve the extreme pressures which importunate creditors are wont to bring upon those who, from one cause and another, have had the misfortune to receive Supreme Court *judgments*, and rather than appear before the Court have had recourse to some obliging capitalist with a view to putting off the evil day as long as possible. But be that as it may, certain it is that Hongkong has been very gay and festive during the past two days, dances, dinners, concerts, theatrical performances, picnics and shooting parties having been the order of the day.

Of course the one given at the Civil Hospital during the afternoon of Christmas Day was one of the most enjoyable entertainments of the festive season. No. 11 ward was very nicely decorated for the occasion, and was well filled with distinguished visitors, amongst whom were His Excellency the Governor Mr. C. C. Platt, A.D.C., Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart, Mr. F. A. Cooper, Captain Hastings, the Russian Admiral, Surgeon-General Preston, Major Thomas, Mr. H. C. Nicolle, Mr. Geo. B. Dorell and many other well known residents. The programme was admirably carried through.

The Medical Staff Corps celebrated Christmas in their usual hearty and thoroughly British style with a dinner at 6.30, followed by a dance at which the various Corps and the Naval department were well represented. Owing to lack of space in this issue, we hold over the report of this entertainment until to-morrow.

The Police Inspectors, Sergeants and Constables gave a Quadrille Party at the Central Station, which proved an immense success. Songs, recitations and step-dances filled in the intervals between the dances, the dog and step dancing of P.C. Struble being the feature of the variety items. This was better than the dancing of the majority of professionals, and was enjoyed again and again until the agile "hopper" was thoroughly exhausted. Chief Inspector Corcoran sang a song so well that he was vociferously cheered. During the evening a liberal supper was provided, and this was done amidst the lighter liquid refreshments being of excellent quality. To complete the whole, the hall had been most tastefully decorated with flags and evergreens. Among those present were Inspectors Stanton and Quincey, the latter accompanied by his eldest daughter, Madeline, who played the accompaniments for several songs gallantly.

The Customs' Mess at Cap-sul-moon entertained a party from Hongkong, catering Ahlberg providing ample cheer in the beautifully decorated mess-room, and Mr. and Mrs. Lyburn dispensing unstinted hospitality. The station was hung inside and out with greens, and high festival continued from dinner time till midnight.

The various hotels and restaurants laid themselves out to provide spreads suitable for the occasion. Thomas' Grill Room fully bore out its reputation in the trifles and dinners supplied, and as a result was filled to overflowing. Grimaldi and unsurpassable host O'Rourke of Hay View fairly outdid himself—and that in saying a great deal—in his efforts to please those who visited him during the day, the wassail-bowl having to be constantly refilled to supply the demands of the holiday-makers.

Several parties went to Canton and Macao, Host Farmer, at the Victoria Hotel (late Shamenee) being in his glory at the former place, while the Boa Vista at Macao was more than usually attractive.

Afloat all was gay and festive. Almost all the vessels in port were dressed with evergreens and bunting, the Douglas liner *Hatfield* and H.M.S. *Caroline* being especially well "dressed" for the occasion. This not being Russian Christmas day the big Russian tricolor was just "as you was," but the help to fill up the warship anchorage which was more crowded than we've seen it for a very long time.

The B. M. M. O. A. and Engineers' Institute Rooms were very prettily decorated, reminding the caller once more of Xmas in "merrie, merrie England."

Taken all around, the Xmas holidays have been most enjoyable, the magnificent weather prevailing adding greatly to the enjoyment of all who went in for outdoor exercise such as cricket, football, and rifle shooting as the police did in at Kowloon, where a scratch team picked by Mr. Quincey was badly beaten by Inspector Hanson's winning marksmen.

"DANDY DICK"

The Amateur Dramatic Club this year prepared to entertain the festive season with an entertainment which would attract all classes in the Colony, but, warned by the ill-success attending the pantomime last year, which necessitated such a great number of performers, a less ambitious effort was decided upon, the choice falling upon Pinner's three-act farce "Dandy Dick," and the success attending its performance last night proved the wisdom of the choice. The house was filled by the time the curtain rose with a fashionable gathering including His Excellency the Governor, General Black, C.B., and Commodore Boyes, R.N. The Band of the Rifle Brigade, by kind permission of Colonel St. Paul and Officers, occupied the orchestra, and enlivened the proceedings by playing the following programme:—

Overture—"The shop girl" (Caryl). Selection—"La Folia di regina" (Dunlop). Valse—"Valse de regina" (Dunlop). March—"Tivoli" (Schneider).

The heaviest part of the work fell upon the *Deans* (Mr. Grace) and he had evidently made a most careful study of his part, his getting being perfect, and his anxiety to maintain his "dignity" at all times and under all conditions very amusing. Whether it was in explaining the chances of his donation to the Spire Restoration Fund being accepted, in his greeting of his widowed sister, *Georgiana*, his temptation by the butler, *Blora*, his anxiety to prevent recognition while in the police station, or his "heavy father" business when his fault had been discovered, he was simply perfect. The part was sustained throughout, and certainly the applause won by his impersonation was well deserved. He was most ably seconded by *Georgiana Tidman* (Mrs. A. Wrottesley) who, as the widow of a well-known sportsman, better known herself on the turf as "George Tidd," was the jolly, half-fellow-well-met companion of sportsmen. She infused new life into the sleepy despatch, turned its rules top-sy-turvy, showed the girls, snubbed the officers, spoke slang fluently, and generally conducted herself to the life in her difficult character. Her first act at all was the cause of immense enjoyment by the audience, among whom there were many officers and privates, and who were consequently loudly applauded.

